

Arnold speaks at First Baptist

Reidsville native discusses racial harmony in return to home church

REIDSVILLE — The Rev. Michael Arnold, son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Arnold of Reidsville, spoke to the congregation at First Baptist Church last week about the need for a sense of community that crosses racial, ethnic and denominational barriers.

Arnold, a summer intern with the South Coast Ecumenical Council in Long Beach, Calif., coordinated a "Koinonia" project there recently in an effort to link people of different races. "Koinonia" is Greek for community.

"Dialogue is the beginning toward opening or raising a level of consciousness that all people are equal," said Arnold, who spoke at his home church in Reidsville prior to leaving for Tulsa, Okla., where

“Dialogue is the beginning toward opening or raising a level of consciousness that all people are equal. ... We as a church should begin to take stands, as Jesus did when he confronted society and its prejudices.”

— The Rev. Michael Arnold
Reidsville native

he will pursue a doctorate in divinity at Oral Roberts University.

"I also believe that churches and their congregations need to be aware that the true message of the gospel is not contained within four walls of the church but it lies within the community," he said.

"We as a church should begin to

take stands, as Jesus did when he confronted society and its prejudices when he spoke with the Samaritan woman at the well," Arnold continued, alluding to a biblical story in which Jesus broke a societal taboo by talking to a mixed-race woman.

Arnold's internship with the

SCEC allowed him to meet with Dr. T. Fletcher, chairman of the Commission on Civil Rights under President Clinton. He also has been invited to preach in a revival in Berlin that is sponsored by the German Parliament and the U.S. government.

A graduate of Reidsville Senior High School, Arnold earned a master of divinity degree from the Morehouse School of Religion at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Ga. He also received a bachelor's degree in public administration from North Carolina Central University.

His parents live at 700 Bradley St. First Baptist Church is located on Hubbard Street. Services are held at 11 a.m. Sundays.